

- ***Read Hebrews 11:1-4*** I don't know if it's just me getting older and being more aware of it or what, but there seem to have been a lot more deaths this year than what seems normal. From people that I have known personally, to folks back in my hometown, to famous celebrities...the number of deaths just really seem to be higher than normal. Back home, I can think of at least 3 people younger than myself who have passed just over the past couple of months. We have mentioned and prayed many times for brethren we know who have been suffering with illness, and have passed from this life. Then all over the news we see the deaths of celebrities. People like Prince, Muhammed Ali, Gordie Howe, and others have just within the past few months passed on from this life.
- The thing about death, though, is that once we die it isn't like we completely disappear. It is not as if we cease to have existed and we are remembered by no one. Prince will always be remembered as the Purple One. Ali will always be known as the greatest. Howe will always be known as Mr. Hockey. When we say the names Prince, Ali, & Howe...music, boxing, & hockey will always come to our minds. More importantly, the 3 young Christian men who have past away in Bowling Green will always be remembered for their faith. They will always be remembered for the way that they lived and the number of people they encouraged to live well. Those three young men have a lot in common with the people here in **Hebrews 11**. You might have noticed what was said about Abel there in **v.4**. Though Adam is dead, the Hebrew writer claims that he still speaks today. In other words, Abel is still remembered. Through the way the Adam lived and the faith he possessed, he is remembered.
- With the deaths, funerals, and reminiscing of others, I have been struck with this question continually in my mind...how will I be remembered? When my time comes, whether it is expected or unexpected...how is it that others will remember me? This morning's lesson will strive to answer this question and we will do so by considering how it is that the people of this well known chapter are remembered even to this day. We'll come to recognize the common theme that these individuals are remembered by the decisions that they made in this life. Simply put...I will be remembered by the way that I live my life, and there are certain things that I need to focus on if I want to be remembered well.

I want to remembered by...

I. ...my faith.

- A. All 17+ of these individuals are included within this chapter (**Heb. 11**) because they lived extraordinary lives that displayed their great faith in God. When the names of these people are mentioned, the first thing into our minds is often their great faith and the fact that they were people who loved God.
- B. While I will never be included in a chapter such as this...I can leave this world and those who know me with a remembrance of a man who was fully committed to God. I want to be a man who is remembered by his faith, and this begins with me putting God first in all things.
- C. There are a lot of ways in which a person can be remembered in this life. Some will be remembered as great actors, some as great athletes, some as great politicians. They were remembered as such because that was what they put all of their effort into. However, I want to be remembered as a great father, a great friend, a great preacher. All of this can be a reality for how I am remembered if God is first and I give much effort and time to growing my faith and putting God first in all things.
- D. If my love for God and my fellow man (which are the two greatest commandments **Matt. 22:36-40**) is the driving force in my life, then I will do those things that will help me to be a good father, friend, and preacher. I want to be remembered as a man who lived by his faith in God.

II. ...my hope.

- A. Towards the end of **Hebrews 11**, the Hebrew writer mentions a large group of individuals who he could mention that time just wouldn't allow. (**Heb. 11:32-40**) He mentions the many different things that these individuals went through in this life and how these individuals were able to get through them. They got through them because they knew that God has promised them something better. (**11:39,40**)
- B. The heroes of faith in **Hebrews 11** were able to gain approval through their faith because they possessed a hope that drove and motivated them in all things. They looked forward to something so much better than the difficulties of this life. They will always be remembered for the hope that they possessed.
- C. Likewise, I want to be remembered by my hope. I want to be remembered as a person who lived with an unwavering hope that drove me to always remember and consider heaven in all that I did.

- D. If heaven is my goal...if heaven is my hope then the difficulties of this life will prove to be exactly as Paul described it in **II Cor. 4:17**, "momentary, light affliction." It will be something that is only seen in our eyes as temporary because we recognize the hope of heaven that will be eternal and will possess glory that is far beyond what we can imagine or compare with things of this life.

III....my trust.

- A. Many of the most notable members of this great hall of faith are individuals who lived during the time of the patriarchs. Individuals like Noah, Abraham, and Sarah were all noted for their faith, but a very important aspect of their faith was their unwavering trust in God. (**Heb. 11:7-16**)
- B. The trust of these individuals was very closely tied with their hope for that better country that we see mentioned in **vv.15,16**. What did this hope and trust allow them to do that showed their great faith?
- A. Noah prepared an ark for a flood that he had not yet seen. (**11:7**)
- B. Abraham left everything and moved to a land that he had no clue about. He was an alien and stranger in an unknown land. (**11:8,9**)
- C. Sarah trusted God to the point that she had faith she would conceive, even though she was well past the age of child bearing. (**11:11**)
- D. These individuals trusted in God above all else and were willing to obey Him in all things because they believed that God was faithful in all that He had promised.
- C. I want to have that kind of trust in God. I want to display that type of trust in my life so that when I am gone people will remember me in that way. They will remember that regardless of the difficulty, regardless of the struggle, regardless of what God asked of me...I was willing to simply trust and obey my God.
- D. Like these individuals, I can develop and grow my trust in God by being convinced of the faithfulness of God and remembering that He has prepared a better country that will be far superior to this world that we live in now.

IV....my being a blessing to others.

- A. So many of the individuals that are mentioned in this chapter are remembered for having been a blessing to those that they were involved with. Specifically mentioned in this text as being a blessing to others is Isaac and Jacob. (**11:20,21**) Both of these individuals did what they could in order for their families to prosper as much as possible, and they were included in this great chapter of faith because they showed their great faith through the way they helped others.
- B. I can't think of very many things that could beat being remembered as a person who was a blessing to others. To have it said that we lived this life in such a way that others around us were bettered by having known us is a very honorable claim. That type of thing could be said about many of the individuals in this chapter, and it would be good for us to live in such a way that it could be said about us.
- C. In order for this to happen, I must live my life with a selfless mindset. If I am willing to keep my eyes open for the needs and good of others and act upon their needs, then it can easily be said of me that I was a blessing of others. Something as simple as a kind word, warm smile, a gentle hug, or a few minutes of my time can be the difference between being a blessing to others and having no positive impact on them at all.
- D. In order to be remembered well, I, again, need to remember the two great commands of Jesus to love my God and to love my fellow man. If I focus on my God then I will have a faith worth remembering, and if I seek for the good of others then I will be remembered as a blessing to others.

V. ...my victory over this world.

- A. One thing that each and every one of these individuals can claim is that they overcame this life. Whether it was keeping their faith when others sought to harm them or do them wrong...whether it was doing things that God asked that they were unsure about...whether it was them overcoming Satan and his temptations...whether it was them suffering because of the evil that has overtaken this world... it can be said that these great heroes of faith overcame this world and were victorious.
- B. This isn't to say that these individuals were perfect...oh these people were far from perfect. Each and every one of them had their weaknesses and faults. Moses had his episode with the rock. Samson and David both had their issues with women. Others had their issues too, but the sum of their lives showed their commitment to God and they prevailed over this world in the end.

- C. Each and every one of us has our trials in this life. Faith issues, family issues, monetary issues, social issues, work issues, mental issues, & I could go on and on and on. However, we must remember that the mere presence of struggles does not mean that this life will defeat us. Whether we obtain victory in this life really depend on the first 4 things that we have discussed this morning. Where is our faith? Where is our hope? Where is our trust? How do we treat others? The answers to these questions will determine whether we succeed or fail in this life and it will determine how we will be remembered.
- D. Bringing it back to me and you personally...How I answer these questions will determined how I will be remembered. I want to be remembered as having been victorious in this life. I want to be remembered for having run this race well. I hope that this is every single person's desire along with me.

While this lesson can seem morbid at times...I think that it is a worthwhile consideration for us. One day, if this earth stands, we will pass away. If things remain as they are then people will gather and they will take some time to remember how we lived in this life. What do you want to be said about you? I know what I would like to be said about me. Now, I don't say all of this as a point of arrogance or pride, but I recognize that how others remember me will more than likely have a bearing on how God will remember me. It will have a bearing on how God will judge me, and I want God to remember me well. I want to stand before God justified and pure by the grace of Jesus Christ. May we all be mindful of how we will be remembered by others and by our God, and may He help us to do those things that will help us to be remembered well once our time on this earth is finished.